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HIGH STREET, JEFFERSON CITY.

Mr. Bolter's Thanksgiving.

"I'll be blamed if I have anything to be thankful for," said Mr. Bolter.

"You can all go home and chaw away at your gobblers, and sing hymns if you want to; there'll be nothing to do in the store anyway. Everybody'll have to stuff themselves to-day, and of course business must stop. I wish the man that invented Thanksgiving Day had a turkey gobbler tied round his neck, and had to sleep and eat with it."

And then Mr. Benjamin Bolter, merchant, kicked over a stool, and yelled at Peter, the office man, to look to the fires and lock up for the day.

The six men employed about the establishment silently left, except Peter, and while the latter silently carried out his employer's instructions, Bolter sat down and thought it over.

"Such an idiotic custom," said he to himself. "It don't matter a cent's worth what the times have been, we've got to have Thanksgiving regular, and go on pretending we've been blessed, no matter how we have been persecuted. The whole country might be on the verge of starvation, and, d—n it, they'd appoint one day in which the provisions should be all eaten up."

"This year has been the hardest one I've known. Everything's shrunk. I've worked day and night, and it I get through and make both ends meet at the end of the year I will be lucky. Yet they talk about Thanksgiving!"

And then Mr. Bolter got up and paced about for a moment and saw Peter standing by the stove.

"What are you standing there for?" said Bolter.

"I've closed up," responded Peter.

"Well!" exclaimed Bolter.

"If you want no more for me to do," said Peter, "I'd like to get off."

"Oh, you would," replied Bolter. "I s'pose you've got a turkey to eat, too, and thanks to give?"

"Not turkey, 'zactly," said Peter, scratching his head, "but we has a pigeon or two."

"Humph," growled Bolter. "Well, go on; but mind you, you be back bright and early in the morning, and ready for hard work."

"Yes, sir," said Peter, and he slipped lightly out the back door and went on his way cheerily.

Then Bolter sat down and reflected for a while, and grew more bitter at the hard times, and grumbled at the slow pace which he was compelled to keep in his march toward riches. By and by he grew sleepy, and he thought he would go home, and he went for his overcoat and shoes. Someway he didn't seem to recollect anything after that, until he stepped off the street cars up town and walked away toward his residence.

As he drew near his home, Bolter was surprised to see a carriage at his door and a crowd collected near it. Two men were carrying a burden of some kind up the steps, and glancing at the doorway he saw his wife and daughter Florence wringing their hands and gazing at the moving figures.

Bolter darted forward and in a moment was met by some of his neighbors who broke the painful news to him.

His only son, Paul, his pride, his hope, on whose life centered his ambition, had been thrown from a moving train and fearfully mangled. Life was not extinct, but the breath came slow and painful and the end was nigh.

They laid the bruised form on the snowy bed, and Bolter threw himself on his knees beside it in helpless agony. The physicians came and looked and turned away. There were whispers in the parlor, in the corridor, sadness everywhere, for there was no hope.

"Save him!" cried Bolter; "save my only son, and take all I have—everything, everything." But the doctors only told him to bear it manfully, and shook their heads.

"Dead!"

Bolter never realized how much that word signified until he stood there and gazed into the face of his earthly idol. All night he sat half dazed, nor could he be induced to leave the room.

Morning came, and he walked bewildered about the house, noticing here and there the preparations for the funeral.

He opened a chest and saw before him a coat worn by the boy, and then he broke down again and wept until the tears would no longer come.

The next day came, and the funeral service was read.

Old Peter was there, his sober, solemn face framed between others from the store, but looking out always pitifully at his grief-stricken master.

At last came the lowering of the coffin, the fall of the clouds, and the old, old words:

"Ashes to ashes, dust to dust."

Bolter stood till the last clod fell, and then followed the others away, back to the silent home, back to communion with his bruised heart, back to the weary round of existence.

His wife and daughter were left him, the former a patient, noble woman; the latter a sweet, modest girl; but the idol of his heart was gone, and he seemed to have little to live for now.

"I do not care to get rich," he said to himself time and time again, "now that he is gone. Business may take care of itself. No misfortune that can befall will affect me now."

But Bolter was mistaken. There came sudden reverses. At first he almost smiled at them, but then came others, and he grew anxious.

Finally affairs became desperate, and he thoroughly roused himself. But it was idle. His goods were seized and sold; his very home was levied upon, and soon passed from his possession. He gathered the little remnants of property he had saved and moved his family into modest quarters. Soon he was forced to leave these for humbler rooms, and necessity at last drove him to the fifth floor of a tenement house, and started him out on the streets in search of work enough to save himself and family from starvation.

Oh, how he looked back then to the bright days when he had abundance, a cheerful home, a happy family; and how he wondered that he could have repined at such a lot.

So the days went by; and another Thanksgiving day came around. Sitting by the dying embers in his bleak quarters, looking upon the pinched faces and shivering forms of his wife and daughter; seeing no hope for the morrow, the strong man broke down completely, and threw himself on his coarse bed in utter despair.

Laying there, convulsed with the great sobs which shook his frame, he heard footsteps on the stairs, and then there came a knock at his door.

His wife opened it, and there stood old Peter, with a basket of vegetables on his arm, and in his hand a brace of very fat fowls.

Peter took off his hat in the old fashion, and stammeringly said: "It hain't turkey, 'zactly, you see, Missus, but it's a pigeon or two for Thanksgiving."

Almost his very words of a year before, and Bolter hushed his breathing as he listened.

"You see," continued Peter, "I got a little work to do this week, and bein' a-to-morrow was Thanksgiving, I thought I'd bring 'em around."

"Bless his noble soul," thought Bolter.

"Could I speak to the boss a minute?" said Peter, glancing toward the bed.

"He's asleep, poor man," returned Mrs. Bolter.

"Well, then, you can tell him when he wakes up," said Peter, "that there's a good place open for him now in Carson's warerooms, and they told me I might call around and say he could begin right away."

Mrs. Bolter caught Peter's hands in hers, Florence began to cry, and Bolter lay perfectly still a minute, almost afraid to breathe, but thinking that to-morrow would be, after all, the happiest Thanksgiving he had ever seen. Then he sat up on the bed, and, with the tears streaming down his face, held out his hands to Peter, and said, "God bless you, my faithful friend. God bless you!"

And Peter grasped the proffered hand, but in a moment more began shaking him most vigorously, and crying out: "Rouse up, sir; rouse up! What can be the matter with you?"

Then his wife and Florence came, and there was more shaking, and at last Mr. Bolter stood up and gazed, in a stupefied way, around, not at shabby tenement rooms, not at dying embers, not at Peter's two pigeons, but at three astonished, though laughing faces, and at the well-furnished office of his own store.

"Why will you never wake up?" said Mrs. Bolter. "Here Peter has been for five minutes trying to rouse you, and the dinner will be cold. We came after you, fearing you would be late, and Paul is waiting in the carriage for us."

"Paul!" exclaimed Mr. Bolter. "Paul!"

"Yes, Paul; but we should never have found you if old Peter hadn't been going past with his pigeons and let us in. Come!"

And was this indeed all a dream? Was Paul spared to him as well as his home and his business?

Mr. Bolter sat down in his chair once more and buried his face in his hands.

"I thank God," he said, "that all these blessings, so undeserved and hitherto so unrecognized, have been spared to me. This shall be a day of thanksgiving, indeed, for me."

This is not a true story, but it ought to be, it might be, it may be yet to some who read it, and it will not be amiss to repeat the prayer of Bolter, and say: "Thank God that all these blessings, so undeserved and hitherto unrecognized, have been spared to me."

A TEST OF THE POWER OF MASONRY.

By J. R. Boyce, P. G. M. of Montana, Formerly of Columbia, Missouri.

(Voice of Masonry.)

I have read to-night in the October number of the Voice, from the pen of that 'old man eloquent,' Cornelius Moore, an article headed 'Masonic Reminiscences.' I too, have Reminiscences of the past in Masonry, and although I cannot so graphically describe the scenes, nor so forcibly tell of these past reminiscences, with your permission I will relate one which made a deep and lasting impression.

The scene is laid in one of the then quiet villages of Missouri, (Columbia,) now a thriving and flourishing town, boasting of being the seat of the State University. I was then a young man but was the Worshipful Master of the Lodge.

A gentleman and myself were standing in front of a store on the street, and two old masons, both members of the same Lodge, passed, not together but in full view. These brethren were both members of the same church, and both keeping hotels, as rivals and under some circumstances they had fallen out, and were bitter in their denunciations of each other. The church of which they were members, through their pastor, also a Mason, had tried to heal the breach between them; but, in lieu thereof, they were more bitter than before. The one could say nothing more bitter and malignant than the other. The case was a desperate one, and nothing but their obligations kept them from personal violence. As Master, I felt my position keenly; knew it was my duty to do something, and yet being the junior of both of them in years as well as in Masonry, I felt the delicacy of my position, and timidly cowered under it. But as these two brethren passed in view, the gentleman with whom I was conversing, not then being a Mason, remarked to me, in substance:

"I once had a very high opinion of Masonry, but my mind has undergone a change."

I said to him: "What has produced this result?"

He responded: "Look at those two old Masons how they vilify and traduce each other. I once thought Masonry had power over its votaries, and that the tie between them was so strong that all breaches could be healed; but I see it is weak like other institutions, and has no vitality."

I said nothing, but determined to test its strength, and it it was powerless to accomplish its great mission of 'peace and harmony,' that I should feel my idol had fallen. With this purpose fully matured, I ordered the secretary to issue summons for all the members of the Lodge, giving no reason therefore nor did I state to any the purpose of that summons. The appointed time came on. The Lodge was fully represented, and all looked anxiously to the East for an explanation. All knew there was no work to do, and regular business could not come up. Both of these belligerent brethren were present.

I arose and said I had called the Lodge to test the strength and power of Masonry over its members, and dwelt sometime on the importance of unity and brotherly love, and closed by a personal address to these two brothers, reminding them of their mutual vows and duties, and said that I demanded of them both, in the presence of God, the Lodge, and with their obligations before them, to advance to the altar, one at a time, and as they both professed to be Christian men as well as Masons, to kneel at the altar and there ask their God to enable them to state candidly and carefully the cause of their difficulty, and to bear in mind that no language unbecoming them and the place they were in would be tolerated; that I held in hand the emblem of power and that I should use it promptly if they deviated.

Silence, deep and profound, prevailed. One of them approached the altar, knelt, remained for a few moments in silent devotion, and rose with tears in his eyes. I asked him to proceed, but he was so softened he had little to say in accusation of the other, and sat down. I called the other to the altar, addressed him softly, kindly, but firmly, asked him to kneel and offer his prayer before he proceeded. He did so, arose in tears, and had nothing to say criminating the other, spoke kindly and softly, and sat down. I arose and asked them if they could not advance to the altar and there extend the hand of friendship and brotherly love to each other, and bury their animosity so deep that the hand of resurrection could not resuscitate it? They simultaneously arose, met at the altar, and instead of extending hands, fell upon each other's necks and wept.

While they were thus standing, I sounded the gavel and called the brethren around the altar and asked them to kneel in a circle, and these brethren in the center. Among the brethren present was a minister peculiarly gifted in extemporaneous prayer I called upon him to pray, and such a prayer. I scarcely ever heard from the lips of mortal man. When he said "Amen," I looked through my tears around, and nearly half of the brethren were bowed with their faces to the floor, and all in tears. I stepped back to East, unceremoniously declared the Lodge closed, and the members commenced grasping hands, and some the necks, and such a scene of rejoicing you seldom see, except at an old-fashioned Methodist camp meeting, and all thanked God for the 'Power of Masonry.'

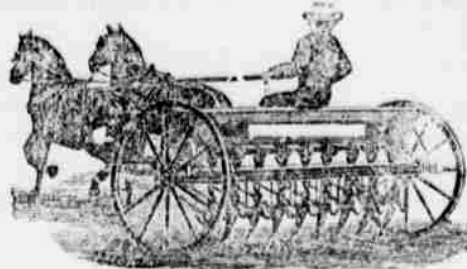
The brethren thus restored to each other's affections ever afterward lived in love, peace and harmony. The gentleman aforementioned afterward changed his opinion of Masonry, sent in his petition, and became an honored member of the Order.

The most assiduous parental attention will frequently fail to prevent coughs, colds, croup, etc. Dr. Bull's Cough Syrup is a most valuable remedy to have convenient when needed.

The Government paper mills at Glen Mills, Delaware county, have closed. The contract for revenue paper, which the mill started to supply, is filled, and as Secretary Sherman is resolved that the lowest bidder shall hereafter secure this work, it may be that this kind of work at Glen Mills may be stopped for some time.

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